UNITED NATIONS **A**

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/RES/46/190
6 March 1992

Forty-sixth session
Agenda item 113

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Fifth Committee (A/46/815)]

46/190. Pattern of conferences

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Committee on Conferences, 1/

Recalling its relevant resolutions, including resolutions 43/222 B of 21 December 1988, 44/196 A of 21 December 1989 and 45/238 A of 21 December 1990,

Taking note of the comments made by Member States in the Fifth Committee during the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, 2/

Noting the role of the Committee on Conferences with regard to inter-sessional departures from the approved calendar of conferences and meetings,

Noting also that the objective in continuing the study and analysis of utilization rates is to bring about a more effective disposition of conference-servicing resources,

Recognizing that improvements in the utilization of conference-servicing resources have been recorded and that further improvements could be achieved, including in the precision of planning the use of conference-servicing resources,

---

1/ A/46/32 and Corr.1 and Add.1.

2/ See A/C.5/46/SR. 3, 4, 6, 9 and 56, and corrigendum.

/...

Recalling paragraph 23 of the first report of the General Committee, as approved by the General Assembly,3/ which requires that Main Committees review the number of special conferences of the United Nations already proposed and scheduled in their respective fields of activity prior to deciding upon the scheduling of new and additional conferences and that there should be an overall limit of five special conferences in a given year,

Keeping in mind its resolutions 33/56 of 14 December 1978, 36/117 B of 10 December 1981 and 45/238 B of 21 December 1990, which request the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures to ensure that pre-session documents for meetings are distributed no less than six weeks before the meetings, simultaneously in all official languages of the organs of the United Nations, and to circulate eight weeks before the opening of a session of an intergovernmental body, with the annotated agenda of the session, a report on the state of preparation at that time of all the documents in all languages required for the session,

Recalling the proposal of the Secretary-General at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly to undertake a fresh outside look of the Department of Conference Services of the Secretariat during the biennium 1990-1991, as well as the relevant decisions of the Assembly in this regard,

Noting with concern that the rule concerning the issuance of documents in all official languages six weeks before the meetings has not been observed in many organs of the United Nations,

1. Approves the draft calendar of conferences and meetings of the United Nations for the biennium 1992-1993 as submitted by the Committee on Conferences; 4/

2. Authorizes the Committee on Conferences to make adjustments in the calendar of conferences and meetings for 1992 that may become necessary as a result of action and decisions taken by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session;

3. Calls upon the Committee on Conferences and the Secretariat to analyse alternative scheduling arrangements for the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council and the ramifications of possible adjustments to the dates as currently scheduled for 1993, bearing in mind the provision of General Assembly resolution 45/264 of 13 May 1991 which stipulates that the substantive session should take place between May and July;

4. Takes note of the guidelines adopted by the Committee on Conferences with regard to inter-sessional departures from the approved calendar of conferences and meetings; 5/

5. Invites the Economic and Social Council to consider formalizing its

---

3/ A/46/250.

4/ A/46/32 and Corr.1 and Add.1, annex II.

5/ Ibid., para. 77.

procedures with regard to inter-sessional departures from the approved calendar of conferences and meetings, by granting authority to the Committee on Conferences to act on its behalf when it is not in session and consulting the Committee whenever it is seized with such requests;

6. Requests the Economic and Social Council to consider proposals on the biennialization of meetings or agenda items of its subsidiary bodies where appropriate, taking fully into account the ongoing restructuring and revitalization process envisaged in General Assembly resolution 45/264 and the views expressed by the subsidiary bodies;

7. Recalls that no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly may meet at Headquarters during a regular session of the Assembly unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly, and requests subsidiary organs to re-evaluate their reporting cycles with a view to completing annual work programmes, where possible, prior to the start of regular sessions of the Assembly;

8. Requests the Committee on Conferences to examine, in the light of the approved calendars of conferences and meetings, particularly that for the biennium 1992-1993, trends in meeting and documentation requirements, as well as the related workload of the Secretariat, on the basis of the relevant statistics and projections covering the period from 1984 to 1993 to be submitted by the Secretary-General, and to report its findings to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session;

9. Requests the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences and the Secretary-General to maintain their contacts with United Nations organs, bringing to their attention ways to ensure the most efficient and effective use of conference services allocated to those organs, including, inter alia, the convening of meetings in a timely manner, rationalizing, to the extent possible, their meeting requirements, as well as monitoring the timely issuance and availability of documentation;

10. Requests the Committee on Conferences to consider, within its mandate, measures to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the use of conference-servicing resources;

11. Requests all subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council to undertake informal consultations on a regular basis for the purpose of improving the utilization of their conference-servicing resources;

12. Requests the Chairmen of the subsidiary bodies mentioned in paragraph 11 above to report the results of the consultations to the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences, and the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive analysis of replies received to the Committee on Conferences;

13. Requests the Committee on Conferences, in consultation with the organs concerned, to examine the cases where the utilization factor is lower than the established benchmark figure for at least three sessions, with a view to reporting on problems and factors that have given rise to such a situation, and to make appropriate recommendations in order to achieve the optimum utilization of conference-servicing resources;

14. Invites the Trusteeship Council to review its meeting requirements;

15. Welcomes the decision of the Committee on Conferences to incorporate an availability index on pre-session documentation into the experimental methodology on the utilization of conference-servicing resources, and requests the Committee on Conferences, in continuing its analysis of the experimental methodology, to consider additional elements proposed in the Fifth Committee, including a review of the benchmark figure up to 85 per cent and the separate presentation of data on time lost due to the late starting and the early ending of meetings;

16. Requests the Secretariat, in order to promote increased utilization of conference resources available, to schedule meetings consecutively within one three-hour meeting period, as appropriate;

17. Invites the Committee on Conferences, in close consultation with the Secretariat and taking into account views expressed in the Fifth Committee, to strengthen its efforts in the coordinated planning of conference-servicing resources, including an examination of the current situation, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session;

18. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session and as appropriate at subsequent sessions, through the Committee on Conferences and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, a consolidated statement relating to the number and costs of scheduled special conferences, bearing in mind the annual limit of five as set out in Assembly resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985 and endorsed in Assembly resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986;

19. Requests the Committee on Conferences to continue to monitor the meetings services provided to organs and programmes not funded from the regular budget and to consider the impact of their scheduling on the calendar of conferences and meetings;

20. Invites the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme and the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund to review their meeting and documentation requirements, in the light of their significant financial implications, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, through the Committee on Conferences;

21. Requests the Secretary-General, in the context of the systematic and progressive replacement and upgrading of the equipment in the conference rooms, to make proposals to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, taking advantage of the experience gained by other organizations of the United Nations system, on the usefulness and feasibility of installing an appropriate signalling system to enable systematically each speaker, as well as the Chairman and participants, whenever a speech time-limit is established in accordance with rule 72 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, to monitor the time left before actually breaking the time-limit;

22. Notes that investments in new technologies are essential for optimum use of all resources, and in view of the heavy capital outlay and recurrent costs, requests the Secretary-General to continue to take appropriate measures to maximize the compatibility and cost-effectiveness of the new technologies to be introduced throughout the United Nations system;

/...

23. Urges that the applications of new technologies should, to the extent possible, be introduced evenly throughout all United Nations conference centres;

24. Urges the Secretary-General to take necessary measures to ensure that pre-session documents for meetings are distributed no less than six weeks before the meetings, unless there is a specific decision to the contrary, simultaneously in all official languages of the organs of the United Nations, and to circulate eight weeks before the opening of a session of an intergovernmental body, with the annotated agenda of the session, a report on the exact state of preparation at that time of all the documents in all languages required for the session;

25. Requests the Secretary-General and the executive heads of United Nations programmes and funds and the secretariats of United Nations organs to ensure that each official document carries on its front page and in an appropriate manner the dates concerning the following stages of the documentation process: issuance by the substantive Department; completion of the translation into the specific language; printing; issuance;

26. Requests the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a task force composed of appropriate Secretariat units and with supplementary assistance of experts from outside the United Nations, as appropriate, to be coordinated by the Management Advisory Service and financed through existing resources of the Department of Conference Services, to review the organizational structure, technological innovations and working methods of the Department, taking into account previous studies, with a view to enhancing efficiency and effectiveness, and to report his recommendations to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, through the Committee on Conferences and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

27. Takes note of the comprehensive programme of work and biennialization of work programme adopted by the Committee on Conferences, taking into account its responsibilities as established by the General Assembly;

28. Calls upon the Committee on Conferences to continue to explore ways and means for a more effective implementation of its terms of reference and the relevant recommendations contained in the report of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations 6/ as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/213;

29. Decides to consider at its forty-seventh session the desirability and possibility of biennializing this item of the agenda in the context of the ongoing efforts to improve the work of the Fifth Committee by, inter alia, biennializing items of its agenda.

79th plenary meeting
20 December 1991

6/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 49 (A/41/49).